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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to determine the manner in which the imposition of increased bureaucratic control over principals influenced their allocation of time to tasks and to investigate principals' perceptions of the changes in their roles brought about by this increased control. The specific bureaucratic control system whose effects were investigated was the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS), a uniform teacher evaluation system mandated by the Texas Education Reform Act of 1984. The final sample consisted of 286 principals. Questionnaires were returned from 136 principals for a response rate of 48 percent. Interpretative post-hoc categories were developed from the responses and frequency counts were made for each category. The data pattern suggested that the increased formalization of the principals' role via their increased state-mandated presence in the appraisal process led to greater formalization of relationships between teachers and principals. Moreover, time spent in the formal appraisal process was at the expense of time that would otherwise have been spent in more informal work areas where informal relationships between teachers and principals could be cultivated. Indeed, principals felt that stricter evaluative controls did not enhance principal-teacher relationships. Rather, they perceived their relationships with teachers as becoming more guarded. (JAM)

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BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL AND PRINCIPAL ROLE[1,2]

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Bureaucratic Control and Principal Role

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the manner in which the imposition of increased bureaucratic control over principals influenced their allocation of time to tasks and (2) to investigate principals' perceptions of the changes in their roles brought about this increased control. The specific bureaucratic control system whose effects were investigated was the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS), a uniform teacher evaluation system mandated by the Texas Education Reform Act of 1984.

Over the past two decades, considerable discussion has centered on organizational control in schools. A number of writers (Bidwell, 1965; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Mintzberg, 1979; Rowan, 1981; Weick, 1976;) have questioned the possibility and/or the desirability of bureaucratic controls in schools, especially with respect to the core technology of schools, instruction. Weick (1976), for example, has suggested that the conventional hierarchical controls do not obtain in educational organizations and that schools function as loosely coupled systems, with the administrative hierarchy only weakly controlling activities in the technical core. Similarly, Mintzberg (1979) has characterized schools as professional bureaucracies in which professional controls prevail with respect to the core

technology and traditional bureaucratic controls dominate in work areas outside the core, and Rowan (1981) concluded that site level school administrators have neither the time nor inclination to exercise much influence over instruction.

However, at least one investigator (Peterson, 1987) has found that loose coupling does not inevitably prevail in school districts and that tight coupling prevails in school districts that are more effective in increasing student achievement scores. Indeed, the effective schools literature (Bossert, et al., 1982; Brookover, et al, 1979; Good and Brophy, 1985; Purkey and Smith, 1983; Rutter, et al., 1979), while generally focused on individual school sites, rather than on district or state systems, holds that strong principal leadership is a critical ingredient in improving student achievement.

While teachers, as workers in the core technology, have been the more widely discussed objects of control in schools, the control of administrators, particularly of principals, has also received the attention of some scholars (Peterson, 1984; Rowan, 1981; Sproull, 1981). These writers have focused their attention primarily on modes of control over school managers and the effects of these modes. This seems an important area of research, since it is through school administrators, particularly those at the school site, that organizational control over teachers is

ultimately exercised, either through direct supervision or through the enforcement of regulations. Indeed, it would seem that knowledge of responses of principals to organizational control is vital to understanding the responses of teachers to organizational control. In this study, we seek to contribute to the developing literature on the effects of organizational control over school administrators.

In his review of mechanisms of control over school managers, Peterson (1984) discusses six mechanisms used by central administrators to constrain the work of school principals. He indicates that these modes of control - supervision, input control, behavior control, output control, selection-socialization, and environmental control - provide a balance of autonomy and control in the work of mid-management school administrators. He further suggests that increased hierarchical controls are likely to influence the way principals use their time and speculates that, when certain principal tasks become subject to increased hierarchical controls, principals will spend more time on such tasks at the expense of time spent on tasks that have looser or more diffuse controls. Rowan (1981) has provided emprical support for this notion in finding that increased regulation had the effect of increasing administrative intensity in areas governed by the new rules. Similarly,

Sproull (1981) found that administrators increased their activity in work areas subjected to increased regulation, although the increase in their activity was conditioned by the degree of their dependence on the regulating agency.

As previously stated, the current investigation concerns the manner in which the introduction of a statewide uniform teacher appraisal system affected the manner in which principals allocated their time and influenced their perception of their role. Because of the importance of a knowledge of this appraisal system to understanding the investigation, a description of this system will precede a description of the research focus and procedures.

The Texas Teacher Appraisal System

Prior to 1984, each school district in Texas adopted and developed its own teacher evaluation system for improving teaching performance and making contract decisions. As part of its Education Reform Act, the Texas Legislature mandated a uniform teacher appraisal system for the state, which was to be used primarily to generate performance information to support decisions regarding placement of teachers on the state's four-step career ladder. In response to this mandate, the Texas Education Agency developed the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS). The major components of

this system at the time of the investigation were the following:

(a) A definition of performance expectations established as five evaluation domains, 14 criteria, and 71 indicators subsumed under appropriate criteria.

(b) Rating forms incorporating the domains, criteria, and indicators and a system for rating each indicator on a binary scale (observed or not observed) and a provision for possible qualitative awards for specificied indicators.

(c) Specifications that each teacher be observed (minimum of 45 minutes) and rated twice annually by each of two appraisers, one of whom was the immediate supervisor (normally the principal).

(d) A system for a quantified rating summary that accorded more weight to the immediate supervisor's ratings than to those of the other appraiser.

(e) Five levels of performance (unsatisfactory, below expectation, satisfactory, exceeding expectation, clearly outstanding), with each level defined by a summative score range (i. e., 1.0 to 1.9 = unsatisfactory).

(f) Requirements that the principal hold a summative conference with each teacher and formative conferences if requested by the teacher or if the teacher's performance score fell below a given level for each observation.

(g) Requirements that the principal develop a professional growth plan for any teacher whose performance score fell below a given level.

(h) An appeal process for teachers who were aggrieved by their ratings.

(i) Over forty hours of in-service training for administrators prior to implementation of the appraisal system, culminating in an examination over knowledge of rules and observation/ coding skill. These sessions were developed and controlled by the state education agency through its regional centers.

While teachers were the ultimate objects of control in the appraisal system described above, it is the administrators

who conduct the appraisals whose behavior was being immediately regulated. Principals and assistant principals who previously worked within the broad parameters historically associated with district teacher evaluation systems now found themselves subject to some rather close prescriptions with respect to frequency and length of evaluation visits, conferencing occasions, and evaluation follow-up. Furthermore, the more than forty hours of in-service training were designed to instill in appraisers standardized interpretations of teaching behaviors and correct coding of those behaviors, and the availability of a grievance system for dissatisfied teachers provided an inexpensive enforcement mechanism.

Focus of this Investigation

The two hypotheses of the study were derived from the previously discussed work of Peterson (1984), Rowan (1981), and Sproull (1981) that indicates that increased hierarchical control over given administrative tasks leads to more administrative time and energy being reallocated to such tasks from less controlled work areas. Since there were no precise measures of the percentage of work time that Texas principals were spending on teacher evaluation prior to the introduction of the TTAS, there are no data available for direct comparison. However, it is possible to gain some

estimate of the increase in percentage of the principals' time allocated to teacher appraisal by examining time allocations reported in the current study with comparable data collected in previous investigations on this topic. That is the approach that will be used here.

The hypotheses are as follows:

> Principals will report a percentage of time devoted to formal teacher evaluation under the TTAS that exceeds that which has been reported in previous investigations of principal time allocations.
>
> Principals will report that the increased time devoted to formal teacher evaluation will be reallocated from task areas that less subject to bureaucratic control.

Also of interest are principals' perceptions of changes in their roles that have resulted from the appraisal system and their evaluations of these changes. This portion of the investigation is more exploratory in nature and will provide material for discussion rather than for hypotheses testing.

Procedures

The data for this study were obtained in a survey of a representative sample of Texas principals conducted in April, 1987. The data were from a larger investigation of the effects of education reform in Texas. Only those

elements of the larger investigation that are germane to this study will be presented here.

Selecting the Samples

To secure a sample that was representative of all Texas principals, a modified cluster and stratified sampling approach was employed, using the individual school as the sampling unit. Individual schools were selected from the most recent issue of the Texas Public School Directory, which lists every public school district and school in the state.

The samples were selected in the following manner. Using a table of random numbers, a page number from the Directory was selected. The table was then used to designate a school, counting from the school that first appeared on the randomly selected page. A second school from the same district, but of opposite level (secondary vs. elementary), was then selected through random procedure. The principals of the two schools became members of the sample. This procedure continued until the sample was complete.

A departure was made from the above procedure to assure that the seven most populous school districts were adequately represented. These districts were Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, El Paso, and

Austin. Four schools were randomly selected from these districts in addition to those which may have been selected following the procedures outlined in the previous paragraph. The final sample consisted of 286 principals, each of whom was mailed a cover letter and a questionnaire (see Appendix A). Questionnaires were returned from 136 principals for a response rate of 48%.

Among the several items on the questionnaire, the two that follow are pertinent to this study:

" About what percent of your work time do you spend on implementing the appraisal system and career ladder?"

"On what areas of your job have you spent less time because of the time you must allocate to implementing the appraisal system and career ladder?" (Space provided on questionnaire for three mentions of work areas receiving less time.)

We recognize that the foregoing question rests on the assumption that principals were spending more time on teacher appraisal than previously, which is, in fact, a hypothesis of our investigation. It was an assumption that would have been challenged by few observers of the Texas public schools, and none of the principals we interviewed challenged it, either on the questionnaires or in subsequent interviews. The expression "implementing the appraisal system and career ladder" was used because the appraisal system and career ladder are systemically linked together.

Post-hoc categories for responses were developed and frequency counts were made for each category. (See Appendix A for examples of principals' comments that were placed under the nine categories: informal supervision, program development, student discipline, student relationships, community relations, office management, faculty relationships, general oversight, and building maintenance.)

After the questionnaires had been returned, telephone interviews were conducted with principals who had indicated their willingness to respond to a confidential follow-up interview and had written their telephone numbers in a space provided on the questionnaire. Forty-three principals were interviewed during July, 1987 by trained interviewers. Because of the selective nature of the sample of principals who were willing to provide a telephone number for subsequent interview, their responses will not be presented as necessarily representative. Although interview questions varied from one principal to another because of a variety of research interests, most of them not addressed in this study, all interviews were concluded with the following question:

"My final question deals with the way in which the appraisal system has affected your role as principal. You indicated on the questionnaire that you spent a certain percent of your work time on the appraisal system. Are there ways, besides your allocation of time, that the appraisal system is affecting your role as principal?"

Results

Quantitative data relative to the two hypotheses will first be presented, along with discussions of the extent to which those data support the hypotheses. This will be followed by a discussion of the principals' comments in response to the interview question appearing at the end of the previous section.

Quantitative Data and Evaluation of Hypotheses

In Table 1 are the data indicating the percent of principals whose reports of time spent on the appraisal system fell within specified percentage ranges.

Table 1

PERCENTAGE OF WORK TIME PRINCIPALS REPORTED SPENDING ON IMPLEMENTING APPRAISAL SYSTEM AND CAREER LADDER

Percentage Ranges	% Principals Reporting Within Range (n = 136)
0-10	6
11-20	17
21-30	21
31-40	24
41-50	13
51-60	8
More than 60	7
No response	4

As the data indicate, the principals varied considerably in the amount of time they reported devoting to their appraisal responsibilities. These variations may be attributable to a number of factors, including inaccuracies in reporting, variations in school size, opportunity for principals to delegate appraisal responsibilities, the strictness of principal adherence to the procedural requirements set forth in state rules, and some amount of discretion exercised by principals.

The mean percentage of time spent on teacher appraisal by the principals was 38%. In Table 2, this result is compared

with similar reports of principal time spent on teacher supervision and evaluation. Only Drake and Wagner's time use category is directly comparable to that used in the current study. Both Goodman's and Sproull's categories are broader, and it may therefore be assumed that the percentage of time spent on teacher evaluation, per se, in those studies is smaller than the figures indicated for their studies in Table 2.

Table 2

Percentages of Principal Time Allocated to Work Categories that Include Teacher Evaluation, This Study and Others

Time Use Report	Category Used	Percentage Reported
This study	Implementing the TTAS	38
Drake & Wagner (1984) (Cited in Drake & Roe, 1986, p. 162)	Teacher evaluation	9.5
Goodman (1976)	Instructional leadership	17
Sproull (1976)	Program planning, discussing, supervising, and monitoring	13

Based on the above figures, we estimate that the percentage of total work time that the principals devoted to teacher evaluation at least tripled after introduction of the TTAS. Thus, the first hypothesis is supported.

This increase in time devoted to teacher evaluation presumably leads to less time being allocated to other job functions. From which work areas did principals reallocate the additional time required by the state mandated teacher appraisal procedures? The principals' responses to this question are presented in Table 3. Because the questionnaire permitted mention of up to three work areas, the total of the percentages in the table exceed 100.

TABLE 3

WORK AREAS IN WHICH PRINCIPALS REPORTED SPENDING LESS TIME AS A RESULT OF TIME DEMANDS IMPOSED BY NEW TEACHER APPRAISAL SYSTEM

Work Area	% of Principals Indicating Less Time Spent on Area
Informal Supervision	22
Program Development	18
Student Discipline	17
Student Relationships	16
Community Relations	12
Office management	12
Faculty Relationships	11
General Oversight	11
Building Maintenance	2

We found that the post-hoc data categories did not all lend themselves to an examination of the validity of our hypothesis concerning the reallocation of time from work areas less governed by bureaucratic control. It is difficult to tell the degree of bureaucratic control that exists over such areas as program development, student discipline, and office management. However, task areas receiving a high percentage of mentions - informal supervision, general oversight, and relationships with teachers, and parents - are mostly of an informal nature and inherently immune to bureaucratic control. An examination of the precise statements falling into these categories (Appendix A), indicates that much of what was given up was of a "Management by Walking Around" nature (i.e. "one-legged conferences with teachers," "informal classroom visits," "visibility," "monitoring the total school," "relaxing with kids," "being available to teachers"). The findings thus seem partially to support the hypothesis that principal time spent on the hierarchically controlled teacher appraisal system would be reallocated from task areas that are less controlled.

Results of Interviews

Given the exploratory nature of this phase of the study and the previously mentioned questions concerning the

representativeness of the sample, the findings from the results of the interviews are presented as tentative and speculative. The discussion of these results will be presented under common themes that emerged from comments of the forty-three principals who were interviewed. We repeat the question posed to the principals before discussing the themes that surfaced in their comments:

> "My final question deals with the way in which the appraisal system has affected your role as principal. You indicated on the questionnaire that you spent a certain percent of your work time on the appraisal system. Are there ways, besides your allocation of time, that the appraisal system is affecting your role as principal?"

Theme 1: Reconfiguration of the role

The most frequent theme in the principals' responses concerned the reconfiguration of their role brought about by the requirements of the appraisal system. Twenty-three of the forty-six principals who were interviewed discussed the manner in which those requirements had altered their job emphases.

The principals who discussed the job reconfiguration theme were evenly divided on the value of the changes in their jobs. Those who viewed the change positively spoke of the increased confidence the standardized appraisal instrument had given them, the enhancement of their power provided by the appraisal system and career ladder, and the manner in

which the rules and regulations legitimated a role change which they felt was professionally desirable. Typical of their comments were the following:

"It helps you to focus on your role as instructional leader. Like when the accrediting team comes in, they want to know if you're out in classrooms, not whipping kids or picking up paper. As far as relations with teachers, it's a little bit easier to get their attention, now that you have the leverage of the appraisal system and career ladder."

"It makes the principal more aware of the leadership role he should play. It has let me know what to look for. I feel better and more at ease in classroom situations. For instance, I may not know the content in an Algebra II class, but I know what teaching techniques to look for."

"I have become a better observer. It has helped my leadership role because I can improve instruction more effectively knowing teachers will be more eager or forced to follow guidelines."

"It has put the principal back into the role as instructional leader. I am more involved with instruction now instead of the problem aspects."

Principals who viewed the changes in their role negatively spoke of having less time for supporting teachers and students and for meeting their other administrative responsibilities..

"Because so much time is spent on the TTAS, I feel I can't do the other important duties. I couldn't be there when the teachers needed me. I used to make unscheduled stops to help teachers, and the TTAS has stopped me from doing that."

"There has been no time to spend with children. I'm so focused on the instrument that I have no time to get to know students. It has taken away the joy of my relationships with students. Time with students now is very structured."

"Year in, year out, we are constantly appraising teachers. This past year, I consider myself an appraiser instead of a principal."

"There is no time for creative administration."

Theme 2: Altered principal-teacher relationships

Six of the forty-three principals who were interviwed expressed concern over the change in the nature of their relationships with teachers. These principals saw the greater formality of the new approach as hampering those relationships. Comments representative of this concern were the following:

"Teachers are a lot more guarded around me than they used to be."

"I feel that the appraisal system separates the principal from the teacher more."

"Principals are now seen as 'the appraiser' rather than someone who can help teachers. They have become natural adversaries."

Theme 3: Stress

Another theme of the interviews, mentioned by six of the principals who were interviewed, was the increase in stress on principals because of time requirements and changed relationships with teachers. The following comments are representative of this theme:

"There is too much stress on principals. We have to worry about a lot of indicators. It creates stress knowing that one of these days a teacher who is presently on the career

ladder may be taken off because she might not have met the standards."

"Teachers' stress level has increased, and this has had a direct effect on me. Many times, my time is occupied with releasing stress from teachers."

"The TTAS has put a strain on my job as principal. I and my assistant principal had to do sixty observations apiece this school year. The tremendous amount of paperwork kept me away from other administrative duties and kept me busy at home, even through the weekends, until the appraisals were finished."

Discussion

The findings from the study support Peterson's conjecture that the imposition of increased hierarchical controls over a given area of work causes administrators to reallocate time to that area from areas that are less subject to control. The extent of the generalizibility of these findings, however, is problematic. The hierarchical controls imposed through the TTAS were quite strong. The system of rules and regulations and the technology of the appraisal system were taught in state sponsored in-service training sessions that culminated in appraisal licensure examinations covering the material presented in the sessions. Principals who did not pass were disqualified from conducting teacher evaluations. Furthermore, the appraisal system's direct linkage to teacher placement on the career ladder and the availability of grievance procedures for teachers who were dissatisfied with their

appraisals made it likely that principals would follow the prescribed procedures, regardless of how much time was required. Bureaucratic controls carrying lighter sanctions may not have the same effects on principal time allocations.

The varying views of the principals concerning the influence of the appraisal system on their roles and on teachers seem to call for a cost-benefit analysis of such systems. Many of the principals regarded the influence of the TTAS on their roles as benign. They mentioned the feeling of increased confidence as teacher evaluators they had acquired, thus supporting the view of Ellett (1987) that some of the recent highly systematized teacher evaluation programs provide principals with increased legitimacy as supervisors. Many of the principals also expressed confidence that they were indeed improving teachers' instruction through the appraisal system.

The areas from which principals took time raise important questions. The TTAS tilts the principal role toward engineer/supervisor, using the role facet terminology of Deal (1987). In discussing this principal role facet, and others - counselor/parent,powerbroker/statesperson, hero(ine)/poet - Deal suggests that emphasizing one facet disproportionately may be dysfunctional. Indeed, formal teacher evaluation is only one aspect of instructional leadership, and principals in this study reported spending

less time on other aspects, such as informal teacher supervision and curriculum development. Ironically, in responding to the questionnaire item concerning work areas from which time had been reallocated to the appraisal system, some principals responded "instructional leadership." Such responses suggest a much richer definition of instructional leadership than what is encompassed in formal teacher evaluation.

The pattern of data suggests that the increased formalization of the principal role, as logic would suggest, leads to greater formalization of relationships between teachers and principals. Time spent in the formal appraisal system was at the expense of time that would otherwise have been spent in the more informal work areas where relationships between teachers and principals are more personal in nature. While none of the principals' comments suggested that the appraisal system had enhanced principal-teacher relationships, some principals presented a picture of increased formalization of principal supervision of teachers and an increased guardedness in principal-teacher relationships. "Legislated Leading," Burlingame's (1987) word play on Arthur Wise's book title comes to mind. The contribution of legislated leading to the kind of collegial relationships that Barth (1987) says

are necessary to serve students in the schools of the 80's and beyond must be a part of the cost-benefit equation.

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Appendix A

Examples of Comments Placed Under Work Area Categories from Which Time Reallocated to Implement TTAS

Informal Supervision

"Informal Classroom visits"
"Working with teachers and students in classrooms."
"Day to day supervision"
"Informal observations"
"Visiting classrooms"
"One-legged conferences with teachers"

Program Development

"Curriculum development"
"Planning"
"Instructional leadership"
"Staff development"
"Monitoring and pacing of instruction"
"Planning sessions"
"Directing instructional change"

Student Discipline

"Discipline"
"Student discipline"
"Student control"

Student Relationships

"Student conferences"
"Counseling"
"Contacts with students"
"Relaxing with kids"
"Student attendance"
"Attendance at school extra-curricular functions"

Community Relations

"Communicating with parents"
"Public relations"
"Communication with parents"
"Parental contact"
"Community relations"

Office management

"Paperwork"
"Budget"
"Bookkeeping"
"Accounting"
"Office management"

Faculty Relationships

"Communicating with teachers"
"Staff meetings"
"Researching and securing ideas to help my teachers"
"Teacher rapport"
"Being available to teachers"
"Motivating teachers to work"

General Oversight

"Overall observation of the school"
"Visibility"
"Monitoring the total school"

Building Maintenance

"Building management"
"Building maintenance"
"Building care"